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Chairman: Mr. Kiwanuka ..... (Uganda)

The meeting was called to order at 10.15 a.m.

Statement by the Chairman

The Chairman: It is with much humility and anticipation that I officially commence my work as Chairman of this Committee. The international security challenges on our agenda are both wide and deep — wide, in encompassing issues of global scope, and deep, in touching upon matters that affect human security at its very roots. Last year, the Secretary-General's Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters warned in its annual report of a "crisis of multilateral disarmament diplomacy". Let us show in our deliberations a new commitment to rekindle the spirit of multilateralism that is so vitally needed to address global threats today. This may be our greatest challenge of all — one we must not fail to overcome.

As has become customary, the Committee will consider some resolutions that echo others adopted at earlier sessions of the General Assembly. These are what former Secretary-General Dag Hammarskjöld once termed the "hardy perennials" of our deliberative process. Our goals must be to continue the process of strengthening global norms to eliminate the deadliest weapons the world has ever known, promoting controls over other weapons that threaten international peace and security, and exploring measures to advance conflict prevention and the peaceful resolution of disputes.

Yet we will also be considering several new issues, including some that are not yet fully covered by any formal treaty obligations, or in some cases not covered at all — such as missiles, small arms and light weapons, information security and the weaponization of outer space. We are, in short, exploring ways to build and strengthen the architecture of international peace and security, as we are simultaneously seeking to reinforce the foundation upon which this edifice must rest. In performing these roles, let us recognize the need to adapt the various ways and means of achieving disarmament, non-proliferation, and arms control to changing times; but let us also reaffirm our collective support for fixed principles and agreed global norms that have served the interests of all Member States well over the years.

According to an old proverb from my country, "However far a stream flows, it never forgets its source." The ultimate source of our work in the field of disarmament is, of course, the United Nations Charter, which provides, in Article 11, that the General Assembly

> "may consider the general principles of cooperation in the maintenance of international peace and security, including the principles governing disarmament and the regulation of armaments, and may make recommendations with regard to such principles to the Members or to the Security Council or to both."

Other sources include our past deliberations and mandates, and other expectations inspired by

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deliberations at international conferences and within multilateral treaty regimes.

Many of the fundamental principles that continue to serve as the building blocks of the rule of law for disarmament appear in the Final Document of the first special session on disarmament, which found that

> "Enduring international peace and security cannot be built on the accumulation of weaponry by military alliances nor be sustained by a precarious balance of deterrence or doctrines of strategic superiority." (*S-10/2, para. 13*)

The fundamental truth in this particular provision was tragically reaffirmed by the terrorist acts of 11 September 2001 — acts that occurred despite enormous disparities in the forces available to the attacking group relative to those of the world's last remaining super-Power.

In the aftermath of those shockingly brutal events, observers throughout the world community have increasingly asked "Why?" — not in an effort to justify the attacks, but to understand their occurrence and thereby reduce the chances of similar events happening again. While the 1987 report of the International Conference on the Relationship between Disarmament and Development did not fully anticipate the extent to which terrorism would evolve into a top-security priority for the world community, it did nevertheless display great wisdom, both in highlighting the importance of addressing the underlying roots of conflict and in cautioning against weapons and the use of force as appropriate or effective ways to resolve such conflicts.

The report stressed:

> "The world can either continue to pursue the arms race with characteristic vigour or move consciously and with deliberate speed towards a more stable and balanced social and economic development within a more sustainable international economic and political order; it cannot do both." (*A/CONF/130/39, chapter II, para. 4*)

Given the recent trend of rising military expenditures and the more chronic problems of human poverty and underdevelopment, how far have we progressed since that 1987 report cited the existence of

> "a growing recognition that both overarmament and underdevelopment constitute threats to international peace and security"? (*ibid., para. 6*)

Indeed, much of the agenda of this Committee has for decades been shaped by the world's longstanding difficulties in solving these closely related problems. Now more than ever before, we can see just how far a distance remains to be travelled down the stream of disarmament — to a world without any weapons of mass destruction, and a world in which other weapons are limited to that which is necessary to implement international obligations and to maintain borders and domestic security. In our deliberations over the weeks ahead, we would all be well advised not just to recall the source of our stream, but also its destination.

We should also consider the route along the way, namely our own deliberative process. We should both read and heed the Secretary-General's recent report on United Nations reform, in particular those parts calling for a reduction in the number of reports that the Secretariat has to produce, reducing also the number of meetings, and improving cooperation with individuals and groups in civil society.

Let us ensure that the First Committee is making its own effort to continue the reform process in a manner that enhances international peace and security in the most efficient and effective manner. I intend to consult with the Bureau in an effort to identify possible options the Committee might consider to eliminate reporting requirements that are no longer necessary, perhaps through the adoption of sunset provisions, and to tighten the focus of the Committee's resolutions, while limiting their number. Just as the Secretary-General has highlighted the advantages of results-based management, let us also demonstrate our commitment to results-based disarmament by ensuring that our resolutions are susceptible to regular progress assessment.

Another of the Secretary-General's key messages in his reform report was that the United Nations must keep its focus on doing what matters, in particular, adhering to the priorities defined by the United Nations Millennium Declaration and the various global conferences over the past decade. Since the General Assembly adopted its first resolution in January 1946, the United Nations has had as one of its top priorities the total elimination of all weapons of mass

destruction. That must remain a top priority. The Millennium Declaration reaffirmed the goal by stressing the importance of implementing disarmament treaties. It is therefore fitting that nuclear weapons, the deadliest of such weaponry, should continue to receive the most attention of this Committee both as the world welcomes positive developments and as it points the way to further progress.

We should pay no less attention to problems of compliance with the global norm of disarmament, as we do the global norm of non-proliferation, for both are interdependent challenges, and addressing them together in this Committee is indeed doing what matters. This collective effort will also require focused attention on the unfinished agenda of eliminating chemical and biological weapons. Our goal here must be to encourage universal membership in the chemical and biological weapons conventions and compliance with all their terms, in particular the requirement for the verified destruction of weapon stockpiles and the prohibition of assisting in the acquisition of such weapons.

With regard to conventional weapons, the international small arms conference of July 1991 made substantial progress in the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons as a major international priority. In accordance with the programme of action adopted by that Conference, countries around the world are now involved in adjusting their laws and policies, reflecting a new determination to combat that difficult problem. The longer the problem goes unresolved, the more it will impede further progress in disarmament, development, human rights, humanitarian relief and many other areas. Those small arms have not yet become a focus for multilaterally binding legal commitments. Such global norms are strengthening each year with respect to another deadly conventional weapon: anti-personnel landmines. In both those areas, national efforts, regional initiatives and global norms together have enormous potential to alleviate real threats to human security, particularly those that threaten the lives of millions each year in developing countries.

My predecessor as Chairman, Ambassador André Erdös, concluded his introductory statement last year by saying: "what is at stake here and now, in Conference Room 4, at United Nations Headquarters in the fall of 2001, is nothing less than the survival and secure existence of our human species." (*A/C.1/56/PV.3, page 3*). My only amendment to that conclusion today would be to change the date to 2002, for the stakes have, if anything, grown over the past year. We must continue our efforts to discover anew more effective ways of encouraging States to resolve their disputes without the use or threat of use of force. We must persist in seeking to drive down the number of weapons of mass destruction and to strengthen controls over remaining stockpiles and related materials until their total elimination. Clearly, we must do more to encourage reduction in military spending, while increasing the world's focus on the deeper social and economic roots of security threats. We must also recognize the need for additional efforts to ensure that future generations have the kind of education and training that will enable them to make wise decisions on the critical issues that come before this Committee. We must strengthen the international rule of law as it applies to disarmament and arms regulation by working for universal adherence to agreed global norms and by codifying new laws, as needed, to address emerging threats to international peace and security arising as a result of new technological developments.

Finally, we must accomplish all of the above working in a cooperative spirit, for, ultimately, mutual respect and multilateral cooperation are indispensable in the search for global solutions to the global security problems of our agenda. Together let us show the world what multilateralism can do.

It is my pleasure to give the floor first to Mr. Jayantha Dhanapala, Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs.

Mr. Dhanapala: My congratulations to you, Mr. Chairman, upon your election to guide the work of this Committee. Your experience in education, development and disarmament gives you a solid foundation upon which to preside over the affairs of this important Committee. A special word of welcome to the representatives of Switzerland and Timor-Leste, which join us as the 190th and 191st Member States of our Organization. I also congratulate the other members of the Bureau and pledge the fullest support of the Department for Disarmament Affairs in all your efforts to make this a productive session.

And a productive session it must be, for some of the issues on the agenda affect the lives of billions of people across the globe in more ways than we realize or are prepared to concede. We are here not to carry on

an empty ritual, but to sustain a process of strengthening international peace and security through measures that include the total elimination of weapons of mass destruction and effective controls over other types of weaponry. Many of those issues, especially those dealing with nuclear weapons, will also shape the conditions of international peace and security of generations to come.

How this Committee approaches those challenges will depend a lot upon how it chooses to organize its work. In his latest reform report on strengthening the United Nations, the Secretary-General offers some timely and relevant advice to make the United Nations a more effective institution. He states that it is crucially important for the General Assembly to continue its efforts to rationalize its agenda and to focus its efforts on outcomes of greater policy relevance and impact — directly relevant to the goals of the Millennium Declaration. He means, in other words, results, or, as you said yourself, Mr. Chairman, results-based disarmament.

This will require that the Committee work harder eliminating overlapping items on its agenda, to stop wasting time and resources on repetitive reports and debates, to reduce duplication and consolidate closely related issues into a coherent deliberative process.

Though the substantive and administrative challenges ahead are formidable, the benefits that disarmament offers to overcome them are as wide as they are rich. Disarmament contributes to conflict prevention, regional confidence-building, alleviation of threats to refugees and in promoting the most precious human right, the right to life.

Disarmament serves the interests of economic development by channelling scarce human and financial resources into more productive pursuits and helps to address the horrible environmental problems arising from past and ongoing weapons development and production. Education on disarmament helps prepare a younger generation to solve its own security challenges without relying upon weapons of mass destruction or the threat or use of force. For these reasons and many more, one can see that disarmament serves the most fundamental goals of the Charter of the United Nations. Everybody is a stakeholder in disarmament, which has been a core priority of the United Nations since its inception.

It is, however, sobering to consider the amount of work that remains to be done, especially with respect to a longstanding agenda item in this Committee — the relationship between disarmament and development. For example, despite its other achievements, the recent World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg missed an extraordinary opportunity to address this issue. Though the Summit's Plan of Implementation referred to peace and security as essential for sustainable development, it took no account of this year's global military expenditure, now estimated at over $850 billion. Yet according to the UNDP's latest Human Development Report, all of the Millennium Development Goals could be met if official development assistance were increased by about $50 billion — just a fraction of current military spending — and sustained at that level. Are we so trapped in a weapon-based security syndrome that we have forgotten how disarmament serves development goals?

I have recently proposed — for consideration and sponsorship by one or more Member States — the establishment of an international commission on weapons of mass destruction composed of distinguished experts from many countries under the leadership of co-chairpersons from the North and South. This would be one way to explore new options and to deepen our collective understanding of the many benefits that disarmament offers to all humanity. The commission could examine problems relating to the production, stockpiling, proliferation, and terrorist use of such weapons, as well as issues relating to their means of delivery. It could produce a report for the international community, one designed to stimulate fresh thinking and to inspire concrete action to lead the world out from the shadow of these weapons — the possible use of which is more likely today than ever before.

Progress towards these goals, however, is contingent, not inevitable. Speaking before the States Parties attending the 2000 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), the Secretary-General warned of the accumulation of rust in the multilateral disarmament machinery. In an ominous response to this warning, the United Nations Disarmament Commission failed to meet this year, the year it was to have commemorated its fiftieth anniversary, while the Conference on Disarmament has just concluded its

fourth successive session without any consensus on a programme of work.

Next year will mark the twenty-fifth anniversary of the first special session of the General Assembly on disarmament and its historic Final Document (1978). Yet some 30,000 nuclear weapons reportedly remain in stockpiles around the world, annual military expenditures are rapidly approaching the $1 trillion level, with no ceiling in sight, and 639 million small arms and light weapons remain in circulation around the world. Only two years after the nuclear-weapon States agreed on an unequivocal undertaking at the 2000 NPT Review Conference to accomplish the total elimination of their nuclear arsenals, we continue to see references to strategic doctrines that call for the use of nuclear weapons — including doctrines that do not exclude pre-emptive use of such weapons, even against non-nuclear-weapons States.

Will this year, 2002, be best remembered as the fiftieth anniversary of the birth of the hydrogen bomb, or for achieving something more positive for international peace and security? The answer, to a significant extent, is in your hands.

The verdict on this year's efforts in the fields of disarmament, arms control and non-proliferation so far remains rather mixed. On the positive side, I am pleased to announce to this Committee that Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan have just agreed — at an expert group meeting last week in Samarkand — on the text of a treaty to establish a nuclear-weapon-free zone in Central Asia. They also agreed that the signing of the treaty should take place as soon as possible. This is a significant achievement, not just for the Central Asian States, but also for the United Nations, which has been assisting this effort since 1997, pursuant to resolution 52/38 S. It is all the more significant, given that this region once reportedly hosted over 700 tactical nuclear weapons, not to mention over 1,400 former Soviet strategic nuclear weapons that Kazakhstan returned to Russia before joining the NPT in 1995.

Also on the positive side, the recent arms control agreement concluded between the United States and the Russian Federation to reduce their deployments of strategic nuclear weapons has inspired new hopes that this progress may one day spill over into the realm of actual disarmament, transparency, and verification, while progressively incorporating new disarmament commitments from other States that possess such weapons.

The fate of the world's tactical nuclear weapons also remains a subject of unfinished business on the global nuclear disarmament agenda. The world would especially welcome new initiatives with respect to the actual destruction of nuclear weapons, along with their fissile nuclear materials and delivery vehicles. I note in this respect that the Group of Eight Industrialized Countries announced at their recent Kananaskis Summit a ten-year, $20 billion global partnership initiative to assist the Russian Federation and other countries in disarmament activities relating to weapons of mass destruction, and I would hope that the United Nations system will be involved in the implementation of these activities.

In other positive developments, eight States have signed or ratified the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty since the Conference last November on facilitating the Treaty's entry into force. This raises the total number of signatories to 166, 94 of which have ratified the Treaty. It is an encouraging sign of the support for this Treaty that new diplomatic efforts are under way to achieve this great goal.

I also welcome Cuba's recent decisions to accede to the NPT and to ratify the Treaty of Tlatelolco. These are two additional steps forward for the universality of the global norms of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation.

Adding to this progress, Member State participation grew significantly last year in two important transparency measures offered by the United Nations — the Register of Conventional Arms and the Standardized Instrument for Reporting Military Expenditures. So far, 77 States have reported data on their military expenditures — a 50 per cent increase since 2000 — and the 120 States that have reported data to the Register exceeds even last year's record level of participation. Through its work with interested Governments, its workshops and symposia and its publications, the Department for Disarmament Affairs has been working hard to achieve such results. I encourage all Member States that have not yet participated in these measures to do so, and I hope that one day all countries will join in sharing the benefits of confidence-building and transparency. I would like to take this occasion to note that South Africa has even enacted a law requiring its participation in the

Register — an example I hope other countries will follow in the years ahead.

With respect to small arms, Member States have been responding well to the Programme of Action adopted by the Small Arms Conference in July 2001. This includes their responses to the Secretariat's requests for national reports on their implementation activities, as well as some encouraging steps forward in monitoring compliance with Security Council arms embargoes, especially in Angola, Sierra Leone and several other African countries. The Group of Governmental Experts on Tracing of Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons is well under way and is scheduled to complete its work in May 2003. While further strengthening the Secretary-General's Coordinating Action on Small Arms mechanism, the Department for Disarmament Affairs is also seeking extrabudgetary support to establish a small arms advisory service to assist in implementing the Programme of Action. Thanks to the combined efforts of Member States and persistent efforts by groups and individuals in civil society, it now appears that small arms are firmly planted on the multilateral arms control agenda, where the issue so obviously belongs.

The issue of landmines, the subject of nothing but bad news for so many years, is emerging as a success story for disarmament, although many additional efforts will still be needed in the years ahead to address this problem in many countries. There are now 129 States Parties to the Mine-Ban Convention and 66 States Parties to Amended Protocol II of the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons. It is also noteworthy that both treaties expanded their memberships this year. In the interests of the innocent civilians who continue to die from landmines and the unexploded ordnance left as the legacy of armed conflicts, I salute the efforts now under way in the world community to address these serious challenges to human security.

Some other developments this year are, however, difficult to characterize as either progress or setbacks, since conditions remain highly variable. At the top of this list would be international efforts to reduce the risk of terrorism involving weapons of mass destruction. With respect to activities within the Secretariat, the Secretary-General issued last month the report of his Policy Working Group on the United Nations and Terrorism, which contained 31 recommendations for action against this global threat, including several relating to disarmament. Recommendation 18, for example, urges the consideration of the establishment of a mechanism in the Department for Disarmament Affairs to monitor global developments in weapons of mass destruction terrorism, on the basis of open sources, and to submit a biennial report on the subject. The Department is now seeking support from private foundations and Member States so that it can fulfil such a role.

Yet, on the other hand, many of the important treaties that help to address this threat fall short of universal membership, including the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and the Biological Weapons and Chemical Weapons Conventions. In addition, the twelve United Nations treaties on terrorism still do not have universal membership, while efforts have not yet succeeded with respect to concluding either a comprehensive convention against terrorism or a convention on the suppression of nuclear terrorism. With respect to improvements in nuclear safeguards, the Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency has recently lamented the fact that only 27 countries had brought into force additional protocols with the Agency. He has noted that much more needs to be done to upgrade the physical security of nuclear materials worldwide and to improve nuclear safety. He has also stressed that the Agency's funding levels are inadequate for many of its high-priority activities, including safeguards.

The collapse last year of long-standing efforts to conclude a protocol to strengthen the Biological Weapons Convention was greeted with disappointment throughout the world community. It is a development that has set back disarmament, non-proliferation and counter-terrorist efforts relating to those deadly weapons. The challenge facing all countries will be to ensure that the resumed Review Conference of the Biological Weapons Convention next November does not lapse into either a 10-minute revolving-door exercise or two weeks of mutual recrimination. Surely, the diplomatic skills of States Parties can devise alternative scenarios, agreeing on measures that can be accepted by all until the new Review Conference in 2006. A failure to achieve this compromise would be a betrayal of the hopes of the world in the face of persisting biological weapons threats from both States and terrorist groups.

The situation with respect to the resumption of weapons inspections in Iraq represents another challenge. It is gratifying to witness the outpouring of international support for the integrity of United Nations Security Council resolutions pertaining to Iraq and for the need for full compliance with those resolutions. As a general principle, all disarmament obligations should, indeed, be rigorously enforced. Compliance is an absolutely vital issue for the effectiveness and credibility of disarmament activities. It is also a welcome development that the Government of Iraq has unconditionally agreed to the return of international inspectors. The sooner the world community can verify Iraq's compliance with its disarmament and other obligations under those resolutions, the sooner efforts can proceed towards implementing another goal found in those resolutions: the establishment of a zone free of weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East, a goal that all States of the region have explicitly or implicitly endorsed.

There are two additional items on the agenda that continue to present daunting challenges: disarmament and non-proliferation education and missiles. Reports on those issues by panels of experts established by this Committee are now before you for action this year. With respect to the former, it is somewhat astonishing to see that disarmament and non-proliferation are receiving so little attention in educational systems around the world, considering the gravity of the problems they seek to address. The education report points the way for new efforts that can help remedy that situation and such efforts are surely needed by the next generation of world leaders and their fellow citizens.

With respect to missiles, it is gratifying to see that a panel of governmental experts from such a diverse group of countries has succeeded in reaching a consensus on a report on this subject, however thin the report may be on concrete recommendations. That there is such a report and that the General Assembly has placed missiles on its agenda are encouraging signs that the world community is slowly starting to rise to the challenge posed by the Secretary-General in 1999, when he called attention to the lack of multilateral norms in this field.

The fact that States are working on new confidence-building measures and on codes of conduct with respect to missile production, development and exports is encouraging, although, regrettably, there are still few indications that such progress is extending into the realm of disarmament, where it is arguably needed most. Efforts are continuing, however, to achieve a ban on the weaponization of outer space. We need to insulate that arena from an arms race — just as we have done with the seabed and with Antarctica — and to protect the space assets of all nations in the interests of international peace and security.

The Department for Disarmament Affairs has paid particular attention to the gender dimension of disarmament. Members will recall that last year, in cooperation with the Division for the Advancement of Women and the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues, we produced a series of briefing notes on gender perspectives on disarmament. The Department intends to continue to pursue its commitment to gender mainstreaming and has undertaken to elaborate a gender action plan, the purpose of which will be to translate that concept into deeds.

There are other areas, however, where we have witnessed very little progress in the field of disarmament and non-proliferation. Those would include the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's continued non-compliance with its Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons safeguards obligations. Although the recent Pyongyang Declaration of Japan and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea states that both countries will comply with all related international agreements, on 21 September the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) General Conference adopted a resolution noting with regret that discussions between the IAEA and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea had yielded no substantive progress on important issues, including the preservation of information and the implementation of safeguards. We welcome the prospect of other bilateral dialogues making progress in that regard.

In South Asia, we were recently witness — once again — to nuclear dangers reminiscent of the Cuban missile crisis. And yet, foreign supplies continue to fuel the arms race in that region. Elsewhere, it is regrettable that the Pelindaba Treaty — the historic pact to ban the stationing of nuclear weapons on the African continent — still has only 13 parties. That is less than a quarter of the States that signed that Treaty, which has not had a new member since 1999.

My remarks would not be complete if I did not salute the non-governmental organizations that bravely continue to work for the cause of disarmament, despite a lack of resources, discriminatory rules of procedure in disarmament forums and active discouragement by some Governments.

It is impossible for me to cover all the issues that are on the agenda or, for that matter, all the issues that are not on the agenda but should be. What is most important is that we persist in our efforts to improve the conditions of international peace and security in this dangerously over-armed world. We will be judged, not by the awards we receive, but by the obstacles we overcome in that heroic pursuit. We should recall the words of Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit, the distinguished former President of the General Assembly, who said, "The more we sweat in peace, the less we bleed in war." Above all, we should never lose sight of the universal scope of the principles and values that lie at the heart of the peace and security system of the Charter of the United Nations — a system that recognizes the equality of all States under the rule of law, and whose subjects must understand that the best way to advance their own national interests is to advance the common interests of humanity.

Only two years after the adoption of the Millennium Declaration, we need also to be reminded of the fundamental values essential to international relations in the twenty-first century that were affirmed in the Millennium Declaration: freedom, equality, solidarity, tolerance, respect for nature and shared responsibility. The realization of those principles and values are viscerally linked to the process of disarmament.

The Chairman: The Committee will now begin its general debate on all disarmament and international security agenda items.

Agenda items 57, 58 and 60 to 73

General debate on all disarmament and international security agenda items

Mr. Albin (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): On behalf of the Mexican delegation, I am pleased to express the warmest congratulations to you, Sir, on your election as Chairman of the First Committee and to thank you for your substantive opening message. Rest assured that you can count on our support during the work of the Committee. I take this opportunity to congratulate Ambassador André Erdös on his performance as Chairman of the First Committee during the fifty-sixth session of the General Assembly. I should also like to thank Under-Secretary-General Dhanapala for the important and useful introductory statement that he made a few moments ago, and especially for his call to have a productive session. Certainly, the state of the international disarmament agenda deserves that.

The year that has passed since we met in this forum at the beginning of October 2001 has been marked by the international fight against terrorism and by international efforts to prevent terrorist groups from gaining access to nuclear weapons and to other weapons of mass destruction. In that context, precisely when we should be redoubling our efforts to achieve the objective of a world free of nuclear weapons, to the contrary, disturbing doctrines have been developed that posit new uses for such weapons. Mexico reaffirms its strong commitment to the total elimination of nuclear weapons, a constant priority of its foreign policy and a goal that the international community has pursued for decades.

As has been acknowledged, any presumption to indefinite possession of nuclear weapons by the States that possess them is incompatible with the integrity and the sustainability of the international nuclear non-proliferation regime as well as with the broader objective of maintaining international peace and security. On various occasions, Mexico has expressed its grave concern at the absence of meaningful efforts on the part of the five nuclear weapons States to achieve the total elimination of their nuclear arsenals, as well as at the alarming signs of the development of new generations of nuclear weapons.

That concern has increased because of the lack of concrete actions by India, Pakistan and Israel to become States Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and to the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty as well as of the impossibility of establishing nuclear-weapons-free zones in South Asia and in the Middle East.

Mexico supports the consolidation of the status of Mongolia as a nuclear-weapons-free State and encourages the efforts of the five Central Asian States aimed at the early conclusion of a treaty establishing a nuclear-weapons-free zone in that region.

In this sombre context, we cannot fail to welcome Cuba's recent announcement that it has decided to accede to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and to ratify the Treaty of Tlatelolco. Both measures undoubtedly further the strengthening of the nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament regime.

However, the efforts of the international community to achieve nuclear disarmament cannot be limited to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. Mexico believes that the importance of the Conference on Disarmament as the only multilateral forum for negotiation cannot and must not be called into question. We support the various proposals aimed at achieving agreement on the programme of work of the Conference on Disarmament, which should unequivocally include the establishment of an ad hoc committee on nuclear disarmament.

Mexico's unreserved support for the proposal that the Conference on Disarmament take up the issue of nuclear disarmament is reflected in the Final Document of the Tenth Special Session of the General Assembly in 1978, which, in Mexico's view, remains fully in effect. Paragraph 45 of that document states that top priority in disarmament negotiations shall be nuclear weapons.

Mexico had the honour to preside over the second Conference on Facilitating the Entry into Force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, which was held in this city in November 2001. The Final Declaration adopted at that Conference reaffirmed the commitment of the participants to the aims and purposes of the Treaty and to its early entry into force.

In the period following the Conference, Mexico, together with other States parties to the Treaty, promoted the entry into force of the Treaty. A detailed survey of those activities will be presented by the Mexican delegation at a meeting to be held parallel to the work of the First Committee. Mexico, in close coordination with the delegations of Australia and New Zealand, will also present the draft resolution on the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty to be considered by the Committee.

Mexico welcomes the work done by the panel of governmental experts charged with preparing a report on the issue of missiles in all its aspects, pursuant to resolution 55/33 A. In particular, we wish to express our appreciation to the delegation of Brazil, which, in its capacity as Chairman, contributed to the completion of the report. Despite the fact that it was not possible to present recommendations, this exercise was useful, since the issue was taken up in a United Nations forum for the first time. Mexico is convinced that the elaboration of legally binding international instruments on the issue of missiles in all its aspects should take place within a multilateral, universal and non-discriminatory framework.

Mexico continues to believe that the best way to strengthen the Biological Weapons Convention would be through the negotiation of a verification protocol, as the international community has attempted to do over the past several years. However, despite this position of principle, we are aware of the difficulties that have arisen and are prepared to show flexibility in the search for a mechanism that would enable us to overcome the current impasse and achieve our objective. We commend the President of the Review Conference on his dedication and perseverance and encourage him to continue his efforts. At the same time, we invite all delegations to demonstrate a constructive spirit in the process.

This year marks the tenth anniversary of the launching of the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms. We are pleased to note that a large number of Member States have voluntarily provided information on their exports and imports of conventional arms during the period from 1992 to 2001. However, this confidence-building instrument has not achieved the desired universality, for reasons that have been considered by the various expert groups responsible for reporting on its maintenance and improvement.

These reasons include the inability of the expert groups to reach agreement on the inclusion of measures to ensure transparency in weapons of mass destruction, in accordance with the original initiative under which the Register was established. The First Committee should perhaps reflect on the obstacles blocking the attainment of this goal in the context of the resolution traditionally submitted by the delegation of the Netherlands. The time may have come for Member States to consider new ways of fulfilling the commitment to achieving transparency in weapons of mass destruction.

The Second Review Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons made significant contributions to international humanitarian law by expanding the scope of application of the Convention and its Protocols to cover all situations of armed conflict and by reaffirming the intention to make continued progress on such issues as the explosive remnants of war, which today have proven to be the cause of great human suffering.

For the Government of Mexico, it is urgent that we give coordinated response to this humanitarian problem. We support an early start to the negotiation of a new protocol additional to the Convention that would prohibit or restrict the use of any munitions likely to become an explosive remnant of war that may cause humanitarian damage, taking an approach that strikes a balance between military exigencies and humanitarian consequences. Mexico will contribute to the adoption of an instrument with that objective at the Conference of States Parties to the Convention to be held next December.

Mexico will spare no effort in our collective fight to destroy and eliminate the threat posed by anti-personnel mines. My Government is convinced that only with a firm commitment on the part of the international community will we succeed in saving mankind from this scourge, and appeals to those States that are not yet parties to the Ottawa Convention to accede to that international legal instrument. We will continue actively to promote the universalization and effective implementation of the Convention and will be among the sponsors of the draft resolution to be considered by the First Committee on this subject.

According to the latest estimates published in the Small Arms Survey 2002, the number of small arms and light weapons worldwide has increased and has now reached some 640 million units. This growing trend has not been countered by the implementation of measures at the national, regional and international levels that were agreed to in the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, which was adopted by the United Nations Conference in 2001.

The excessive availability of this type of weapon is most evident in conflict zones. The various peacekeeping operations of the United Nations, particularly in Africa, have included a disarmament component aimed at collecting and destroying the surplus of small arms and light weapons threatening the stability and security of countries that have emerged from conflict and entered the phase of peace-building. However, the responsibility for combating the illicit trade in and production of small arms and light weapons lies with all States, particularly the producing and importing States.

We have taken note of the various regional meetings and initiatives that have taken place since the United Nations Conference was held and we have participated actively in the so-called Franco-Swiss Initiative to elaborate a political strategy for the collection of small arms and light weapons by promoting at all times the transparency and openness of the process. We have also noted that one of the main impediments to the full implementation of the measures agreed to in the Programme of Action is insufficient international cooperation and assistance, despite the fact that the commitments made in this field are reflected in section III of the Programme.

Mexico wonders what accounting we will give to the Conference of States Parties in 2003 to review the implementation of the Programme of Action at the national, regional and global levels. Should the current situation with respect to the lack of international financial aid flows to prevent, combat and eradicate the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons continue, we will arrive at that Conference with a balance sheet of unequal implementation, in which the industrialized regions will flaunt the progress they have made while the regions of the developing world will have no reason to celebrate.

Mexico considers that the agenda of the Conference of the States Parties in 2003, in addition to reviewing the implementation of the Programme of Action, should also take up those items that were not completed, such as the activities of intermediaries in international trade in small arms and light weapons, prohibition against their use by civilians, and prohibition of arms sales to non-State actors.

Two years have gone by since the adoption of the Millennium Declaration by the General Assembly, and no significant progress has been made towards the elimination of weapons of mass destruction, in particular nuclear weapons. Differences persist among Member States on the convening of an international

conference, first proposed several years ago by the Secretary-General, to identify ways of eliminating nuclear threats. Mexico decided to promote this initiative in 2001, and it was received with major reservations by some of the nuclear-weapon States. It would appear that there are double standards in fulfilling the commitments undertaken in the Millennium Declaration by all Member States of the United Nations.

This notwithstanding, Mexico firmly believes that the Members of the Organization must have the opportunity to analyse the various disarmament issues in the light of the current international situation. This is an exercise that should have already taken place. We therefore support the call made by the Non-Aligned Movement to convene the Fourth Special Session of the General Assembly devoted to Disarmament in the near future.

I cannot conclude this statement without referring to two additional initiatives taken up by Mexico at the current session. In a follow-up to resolution 55/33 E, entitled "United Nations study on disarmament and non-proliferation education", the Mexican delegation will submit a draft resolution on the report of the Group of Experts, chaired by Ambassador Miguel Marín-Bosch, which contains a set of recommendations to promote education in these fields.

We will also present a draft resolution concerning the United Nations Disarmament Information Programme, as a follow-up to resolution 55/34 A, in order to provide guidelines for the activities of the United Nations in this field.

Ms. Whelan (Ireland): First of all, let me congratulate you, Sir, on your appointment as Chair of this year's session of the First Committee of the General Assembly. I would also like to thank both you and Under-Secretary-General Dhanapala for your thought-provoking statements.

I am honoured to make a contribution to the general debate on behalf of Brazil, Egypt, Ireland, Mexico, New Zealand, South Africa and Sweden, partners of the New Agenda Coalition (NAC). I will, at the same time, give the Committee an overview of the NAC position on a number of issues that are detailed in the two draft resolutions which we will put forward at this session.

The first of these draft resolutions, entitled "Towards a nuclear-weapon-free world: the need for a new agenda", builds on the previous work of the New Agenda Coalition, including at the 2000 Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) Review Conference and at last April's Preparatory Committee meeting for the 2005 Review Conference. As such, it represents a NAC contribution to the ongoing review process and to the goals of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation.

It is the firm belief of the NAC that the horrific events that took place one year ago in this city have underlined the importance of the multilateral approach to disarmament. These events, and the possibility that terrorists could make use of weapons of mass destruction, have highlighted the importance of the total elimination of nuclear weapons. These attacks have been a wake-up call. It is time to take the necessary collective action in relation to nuclear disarmament.

In 1995, the NPT States Parties renewed their commitment to pursue negotiations in good faith on effective nuclear disarmament measures. By the time we reach the 2005 NPT Review Conference, a full decade will have passed. The undertakings made by States Parties at the 2000 NPT Review Conference have mapped out the practical steps through which such progress can be achieved. The ongoing NPT Preparatory Committee process provides a facilitating framework. We, as an international community, must take the agreed practical steps. Our continued indecision leaves us as vulnerable to a nuclear event as at any time in our history.

We believe that the first NAC draft resolution represents an opportunity to consolidate and to enhance the contribution that negotiated treaties can make to international nuclear security. We have already fallen behind in this endeavour. Now is the time to reinvigorate the wider nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation debate.

Without rehearsing the content of the initial NAC resolution, I urge like-minded States to join us: in calling upon the Conference on Disarmament to establish an ad hoc committee to deal specifically with nuclear disarmament; in wishing to see the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) enter into force as soon as possible with confirmation of the moratorium on all test explosions; in expressing deep

concern about the continued retention of the nuclear weapons option by the three States who have not yet acceded to the NPT, and calling on them to do so and bring into force full scope IAEA safeguards; in seeking the resumption of negotiations on a treaty to ban the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons, taking into consideration both nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation objectives; in wanting to prevent an arms race in outer space and calling on the Conference on Disarmament to re-establish an ad hoc committee to deal with this issue; and in calling on nuclear-weapon States to respect fully their existing commitments with regard to security assurances and for recommendations on this issue to be made to the 2005 NPT Review Conference.

Emerging approaches to the broader role of nuclear weapons, including the development of new types of nuclear weapons and new rationalizations for their use, give urgency to our concerns. There is an accumulation of nuclear risk. There is a disturbing trend of convergence between the possible deployment of tactical nuclear weapons and conventional ones. This trend is among the many horizontal and vertical pressures that are extending the range of nuclear and related threats that we face.

In an effort to highlight the particular threat posed by tactical nuclear weapons, we as NAC partners will put forward a second draft resolution on this topic. The draft resolution will include a call for the reduction of tactical nuclear weapons to be given priority and carried out in a transparent, verifiable and irreversible manner. It will also include a call to further reduce the operational status of tactical nuclear weapons.

The NAC coalition strongly contends that it is not tenable to leave our internationally agreed nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation action strategies in open-ended abeyance. The two resolutions we are putting forward can act as a catalyst for meaningful progress and concrete action. They have the necessary operational flexibility to meet the concerns of all like-minded States. By way of a positive outcome to this session's debate, we invite like-minded States to support our draft resolutions in a spirit of shared global concern.

Finally, on behalf of the NAC, I would like to take this opportunity to welcome the announcement of Cuba's intention to adhere to the NPT. At the same time, we welcome the agreement of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan on the text of a treaty to establish a nuclear-weapon free zone in Central Asia.

Mr. Westdal (Canada): Congratulations on your election and on your eloquence earlier this morning when opening our proceedings, Mr. Chairman. In the weeks to come, we will do all we can to help you succeed.

We met a year ago in the shadow of a horror that made us all feel vulnerable to new threats to our security. Without a vote, we endorsed multilateralism as a core principle in our fight against terrorism. We knew that we had to make multilateralism work to stop the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. Now, after a year of drama — much of it sobering in our field — we meet again with the urgent responsibility of setting new standards for common, practical action to strengthen vital non-proliferation and disarmament treaties and procedures.

Many States have taken decisive action. For its part, the Group of Eight (G-8), meeting in Kananaskis, Canada, launched a Global Partnership Against the Spread of Weapons and Materials of Mass Destruction designed to prevent terrorists or those who harbour them from acquiring or developing nuclear, chemical, radiological or biological weapons, missiles and related materials, equipment and technology. The G-8 made a commitment to raise up to $20 billion over the next 10 years in order to destroy chemical weapons, dismantle decommissioned nuclear submarines, dispose of fissile materials and employ former weapons scientists. G-8 leaders invited all other States to participate and contribute that also seek to promote the adoption, universalization and full implementation of multilateral treaties and international instruments designed to prevent the proliferation or illicit acquisition of weapons or materiel of mass destruction, missiles and related technology.

Foremost among these instruments is the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). Its universalization remains a key Canadian priority. That is why we were happy to welcome Cuba's decision to accede to the NPT and to ratify the Treaty of Tlatelolco. Those welcome steps reinforce rules-based multilateralism to contend with threats, old and new, to international security. Canada calls on India, Israel and Pakistan — States still outside the Treaty — to join.

A related high priority is enhanced accountability, the base on which the NPT was indefinitely extended seven years ago. At the Preparatory Committee meeting this spring, we emphasized the reporting requirement in the 13-step action plan agreed upon at the 2000 Review Conference. We are consulting with interested States parties and will address this subject in further preparations for the 2005 Review Conference. We should recall that at the heart of the NPT, non-proliferation and disarmament are bound one to the other. Canada thus welcomed the Treaty of Moscow, by which the United States and the Russian Federation, launching a new and very welcome security partnership and high-level dialogue through the Consultative Group for Strategic Security, agreed to reduce their nuclear arsenals. We note that codification, verifiability, transparency and irreversibility set the highest standards by which the international community marks progress in this field.

We are also committed to a comprehensive nuclear test ban, which is essential to both non-proliferation and disarmament. Although several key States have yet to sign or ratify the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), encouraging progress has been achieved. Ninety-four States are on board and an impressive international monitoring system has been established to deter and detect explosive nuclear tests. We urge all States to ensure continued funding for the monitoring system and to support the Provisional Technical Secretariat's vital work. Of course, we also urge all States to sign and ratify the Treaty itself. Meanwhile, it is crucial that the moratorium on tests be sustained.

(*spoke in French*)

The events of last year surely strengthen the case for a fissile material cut-off treaty (FMCT). Canada will again this year seek the Committee's consensus support for the negotiation of an FMCT in the Conference on Disarmament. Those events also clearly underscore the vital contribution of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). We applaud its determined campaign to strengthen safeguards, and acknowledge the need for the Agency to have adequate resources to enable it to fulfil its mandate in this area. We also urge all States that have yet to do so to sign and implement comprehensive safeguards agreements and the IAEA's Additional Protocol. I should also like to point out that if we want to enhance our security we should strengthen the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material.

Other weapons of mass destruction pose an ominous threat. We are concerned that the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention (BWC) lacks the effective means to ensure compliance and that our sustained effort to negotiate a protocol to that end has so far been fruitless. At the resumed Review Conference next month, we would like to reaffirm that biological weapons are abhorrent, and we hope to plan concerted, cooperative and practical BWC implementation.

Another old threat — that of chemical weapons — still haunts us. Since we last met, the Chemical Weapons Convention has marked its fifth anniversary in force. The Convention is now supported by 146 States parties — a remarkable total — and there are good prospects for more adherents in the near future. Less encouraging, however, is the fact that the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons is still struggling to fulfil its vital mandate. Next month, States parties must ensure that that organization is provided with the resources that it still needs in order to do its job, in particular its verification and inspection work.

(*spoke in English*)

A year ago, we recognized anew that we needed multilateralism that worked, and disarmament and non-proliferation pacts that sustained confidence. That means transparency and verification. It also means effective action to ensure compliance. The headlines these days are all about our response to suspected violations. There is much at stake for the future of multilateral arms control. We all know that doing nothing is not an option. We also know, however, that we need to get it right. Canada favours collective action through the United Nations.

I have dealt so far with weapons of mass destruction. The fact is, however, that small arms and light weapons still do most of the killing, one by one. To stem the carnage, States convened last year to plan practical action through multilateral engagement to support regional and national efforts. It remains the responsibility of each State to implement the Programme of Action and thus protect millions around the world. Implementation will clearly also depend on sustained multilateral and regional cooperation, concerted political will and real resources.

In a few weeks' time we will celebrate the fifth anniversary of the signing of the Ottawa Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and On Their Destruction. Some 129 States are now on board, including many of the most mine-affected countries in the world. We want every State to join, and we want to sustain focus and action on the Convention's core humanitarian objectives: mine clearance, stockpile destruction, mine-risk education and help for survivors.

We are determined as well to deal with other explosive remnants of war. Last December, States party to the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons took a key step forward, with an amendment to extend the scope of the Convention to armed conflict within, as well as between, States. I am pleased to say that Canada was the first State formally to accept this amendment. We hope other High Contracting Parties will follow suit, bringing the amended provisions into early force. We urge that they join us and many others in establishing a negotiating mandate on explosive remnants of war at this December's meeting on the Convention.

Finally, I draw attention to Canada's enduring commitment to the prevention of an arms race in outer space. The risk inherent in any notion of war in space, of a "Tragedy of the Commons", is utterly compelling. A belt of debris in the wake of such war would forever deprive humanity of the immense economic, social and security benefits of the peaceful use of outer space. We will support the peaceful uses of space here and we will keep pressing to deal with its non-weaponization at the Conference on Disarmament.

In closing, Mr. Chairman, I want to pay tribute to the contribution to our deliberations of civil society. Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) play a vital role in research, analysis and information sharing. Our work would be virtually impossible in this day and age without them. Canada consults systematically with national and international NGOs. We welcome and value their interest and active support.

The responsibility we share in this First Committee is compelling. As you, Mr. Chairman, and Under-Secretary Dhanapala have emphasized, our responsibility is to achieve results. It is to build and defend a universal framework of indivisible, sustainable security, to protect the credibility and enhance the effective force of multilateral agreements. It is not just to yearn for security; it is to plan and to act to make it happen, to make it real.

Mr. Nielsen (Denmark): Allow me to congratulate you most sincerely on your election as Chairman of the First Committee. I am confident that you will guide us through the Committee's work in an excellent way, and I wish to assure you of the wholehearted support of the European Union (EU) in the discharge of your important responsibilities.

I have the honour to speak here on behalf of the European Union. The Central and Eastern European countries associated with the Union — Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia — and the associated countries of Cyprus and Malta have expressed their wish to align themselves with the statement I am about to make. The European Free Trade Association (EFTA) countries Iceland and Norway, members of the European economic area, also endorse this statement.

More than a year has now passed since the horrific terrorist attacks against the United States of America on 11 September 2001. Thousands of innocent people became victims of terrorism and many died in a selfless and heroic effort to save the lives of others. It is with deep sorrow that we remember that tragic day. Our thoughts go to the bereaved families and friends in the United States and throughout the world who were stricken by the violence unleashed a year ago.

The security and stability of the international community is being challenged, both globally and regionally, by the risks brought about by the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery. The terrorist attacks of 11 September have given an even greater sense of urgency to the common efforts required from all States to prevent these weapons and their means of delivery from reaching the hands of terrorist groups.

The EU responded quickly to the challenge of international terrorism. On 21 September 2001, the Extraordinary European Council adopted conclusions and a plan of action in order to give the necessary impetus to the EU's actions to combat terrorism. On 10 December 2001 the EU Council of Ministers launched a targeted initiative within the field of non-proliferation, disarmament and arms control to counter the threat of terrorism. To add further substance and direction to the Initiative, the Council of Ministers

adopted a list of concrete measures in April 2002. This list identifies four areas of action: review and strengthening of relevant multilateral instruments in the field of non-proliferation, disarmament and export control; full implementation of export controls; international cooperation in the field of protection and assistance against the use or threat of use of chemical and biological weapons; and enhanced political dialogue with third countries in the field of non-proliferation, disarmament and arms control.

The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) remains the cornerstone of the global non-proliferation regime and the essential foundation for the pursuit of nuclear disarmament. The EU supports wholeheartedly the objectives laid down in the Treaty and is committed to the effective implementation of the Final Document of the 2000 NPT Review Conference and of the decisions and the resolution adopted at the 1995 NPT Review and Extension Conference.

The EU welcomes the work of the first Preparatory Committee meeting, held in New York in April 2002 and calls on all States to make a success of the preparatory meetings leading up to the Review Conference in 2005. The preparatory work should be a balanced exercise, paying due attention to all aspects of the Treaty's implementation: nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament, as well as peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

The Union welcomes the announcement of the signature by the United States and the Russian Federation of a new Treaty on the reduction of their strategic nuclear arsenals. In this context, the principles of irreversibility and transparency remain important. This Treaty is a step forward and a positive contribution to the efforts of the international community in the field of disarmament and non-proliferation. The EU hopes that it will be followed by other initiatives to strengthen international security and stability.

The European Union continues to attach special importance to achieving universal adherence to the NPT. The EU therefore welcomes the recent announcement by Cuba that it intends to accede to the NPT as a non-nuclear-weapon State and calls upon those States not yet parties to the NPT to accede as non-nuclear-weapon States.

The importance and urgency of continuing the signing and ratification process of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) in order to enable its entry into force as soon as possible, was underlined in the Final Document of the 2000 NPT Review Conference. The Union wishes to reiterate that it spares no effort in promoting the early entry into force of the Treaty and universal accession to it. It is with this in mind that the Union expresses its full support for the rapid establishment and for the operation of the verification regime. To ensure that the resolve of the international community does not weaken, it calls on all those States that have not yet done so to sign and ratify the CTBT, without delay and without conditions, in particular those States whose ratification is required for the Treaty to enter into force.

The negotiation at the Conference on Disarmament of a non-discriminatory and universal treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices constitutes an essential stage in nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament.

The European Union regrets that a consensus has not yet been reached in the Conference on Disarmament in order to launch the negotiation under the mandate approved in 1995 and in 1998. We reiterate our call to the members of the Conference to make every effort to attain the objective as soon as possible.

The EU has stated that the so-called Amorim proposal contains elements for a rapid agreement if all members of the Conference on Disarmament display a spirit of openness and pragmatism. In this respect, the Union restates its view that the work of the subsidiary bodies of the Conference should begin without delay, on the basis of mandates which are sufficiently pragmatic and broad to be the subject of an agreement. This work should, furthermore, cover the fissile material cut-off treaty, nuclear disarmament and the prevention of an arms race in outer space.

It is regrettable that the Conference on Disarmament has now finished its fourth consecutive year without consensus on a work programme. The EU, however, welcomes the fact that new and creative ideas for a work programme have been put forward during this year's sessions of the Conference, including a cross-group effort and other efforts by EU Member States to develop a work programme. The EU hopes

such initiatives will receive constructive attention from all Conference delegations in the coming months, hopefully enabling us to start substantive work in the Conference from the outset of the first session of 2003.

Furthermore, the European Union would like to recall its attachment to the follow-up on the enlargement process of the Conference on Disarmament, which is the only multilateral negotiating forum for disarmament and arms control. The follow-up on this process is of great importance, in particular to those members of the European Union that are not yet members of the Conference, as well as the associated countries with the Union, which have submitted their request for admission to the Conference.

The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) international safeguards system is the fundamental pillar of the global nuclear non-proliferation regime. We share the concerns of the IAEA and regret that 48 States party to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) have not yet entered into comprehensive safeguards agreements with the IAEA. We call upon those States to fulfil their obligations in accordance with article III of the Treaty and to conclude comprehensive safeguards agreements as a matter of urgency.

The EU considers the Additional Protocols to be an integral part of the IAEA safeguards system. The Union accords a high priority to the implementation of an additional protocol by all States concerned. We therefore urge those States to conclude and implement an additional protocol as soon as possible. All member States of the EU have committed themselves to have their additional protocols enter into force simultaneously, and we aim to do so as soon as possible.

The EU wishes to recall its concern regarding the continued existence of non-safeguarded nuclear facilities and material in States not party to the NPT or equivalent treaties. The EU appeals to all States not party to the NPT to place all their nuclear activities under IAEA safeguards.

The European Union believes that the creation of internationally recognized nuclear-weapons-free zones, based on arrangements freely concluded between the States of the region, strengthens regional and global peace and security. We welcome and support the signature and ratification by the nuclear-weapons States of the relevant Protocols on nuclear-weapons-free zones. We look forward to the entry into force of the African nuclear-weapon-free zone treaty at an early date, and welcome the news of the Central Asian States working on a treaty on the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in their region.

In the same context, we repeat our appeal to the countries of South Asia to make every effort to prevent an arms race in the region. We continue to urge India and Pakistan to cooperate with the efforts of the international community to strengthen the non-proliferation and disarmament regime. We repeat our call to them to implement the specific measures set out in Security Council resolution 1172 (1998), in particular accession to the NPT, and signature and ratification of the Comprehensive Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT). Both countries have declared moratoria on nuclear testing and a willingness to participate in the negotiation of a fissile material cut-off treaty. We call on them to take all necessary measures towards fulfilling their stated intention.

While we note with interest the commitment made by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea at Pyongyang on 17 September that it would comply with all related international agreements in the nuclear field, we remain seriously concerned by its continuing failure to implement fully its binding safeguards agreement with the IAEA. We deplore the lack of tangible progress made on important verification issues over the past year. The EU urges the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to work with the IAEA to implement the specific verification steps proposed last year without further delay and to achieve full compliance with its safeguards agreement. The European Union repeats its appeal to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to sign and ratify unconditionally the CTBT without delay. Finally, the European Union also notes with interest the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's stated intention of continuing its moratorium on missiles and expresses its concern with regard to its exports of missiles and missile technology.

The EU remains committed to the full implementation of the United Nations Security Council resolutions on the Middle East and the 1995 NPT Review and Extension Conference. We continue to support efforts to establish an effectively verifiable Middle East zone that is free of weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems. Furthermore,

we call on all States in the region that have not done so to conclude a comprehensive safeguards agreement with the IAEA, to negotiate such agreements and bring them into force as soon as possible. The European Union believes that the accession of all States in the region to the conventions banning chemical and biological weapons and to the NPT would make an essential and extremely significant contribution to peace and to regional and global security.

It remains a matter of major concern to the EU that three and a half years have passed since the IAEA has been able to implement its mandate in Iraq under relevant United Nations Security Council resolutions, and that the Agency remains unable to provide any assurances regarding Iraq's compliance with its obligations under those resolutions. We note with interest that Iraq's Foreign Minister, in a letter dated 16 September 2002 addressed to the United Nations Secretary-General, announced the decision of the Iraqi Government to let the weapons inspectors return to Iraq. The EU strongly urges Iraq to implement, without conditions, in full and without any delays, all relevant Security Council resolutions and to take steps to enable the IAEA and the United Nations Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission (UNMOVIC) to carry out its mandate in the country.

The European Union is deeply concerned about the growing proliferation of ballistic missiles capable of carrying weapons of mass destruction. The EU sees an urgent need for the development of globally accepted norms and practices in support of ballistic missile non-proliferation. The International Code of Conduct against Ballistic Missile Proliferation (ICOC) will be an important first step towards the integration of ballistic missiles into the multilateral non-proliferation and disarmament regime. The Code also confirms the commitment by subscribing States to the United Nations Declaration on International Cooperation in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space for the Benefit and in the Interest of All States. The European Union (EU) is prepared to work together with other subscribing States to further develop the Code.

The EU has supported, from the very beginning, the drafting of an international code. The EU is aware that the Code is not, and was never meant to be, the only missile initiative in existence. The EU would welcome increased United Nations involvement in the missile issue. Therefore, we welcome the conclusion of the United Nations Panel of Governmental Experts on missiles that "It is essential to have continued international efforts to deal with the issue of missiles" (*A/57/229, p. 20*). It is, however, also important to achieve quick results of a truly substantive nature. We think that the ICOC is the most concrete and advanced initiative in this field. The European Union urges all States to attend the ICOC launching conference, to be held from 25 to 26 November at The Hague, and to join the Code.

The European Union considers the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) to be a unique instrument for a complete ban on chemical weapons and for their destruction under international verification. The European Union has carried out démarches to promote universal adherence by the States that have yet to sign and ratify the Convention. The European Union also recalls the importance of articles IV and V of the Convention, obliging relevant States to destroy 100 per cent of their chemical weapons and their chemical weapons production facilities no later than 10 years after the entry into force of the Convention.

The European Union calls on all States Parties concerned to do everything possible to ensure compliance with the prescribed deadlines. We are fully aware of the Russian Federation's application of a revised delayed draft plan for destruction of its chemical weapons. The European Union stresses the importance of ensuring that the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons and all Member States are provided with the relevant information to allow decisions on such new deadlines.

The Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention represents a key instrument to prevent biological agents or toxins from being used as weapons. The total ban on such weapons of mass destruction becomes especially important in the light of their actual use for terrorist purposes over the past year. The European Union attaches high priority to the strengthening of the Convention and to a successful outcome of the Fifth Review Conference when it resumes in November. Member States of the EU have considered the issue of national compliance and legislative and regulatory implementation measures, and they support proposals to strengthen such measures. The Union presented proposals to that effect, as well as on confidence-building and on non-compliance clarification and investigation during the first part of the Fifth Review Conference, in November 2001. The European Union

believes that such proposals could be agreed for a follow-up process to strengthen the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention when the Review Conference resumes. The Union is consulting with States parties for a consensus along those lines at the Review Conference and encourages other States Parties to take a similar approach.

The events of 11 September 2001 highlighted the importance of efficient export control measures. The European Union finds it essential that all exporting States assume their responsibilities and take measures to ensure that exports of sensitive materials, equipment and technologies are subject to appropriate surveillance and control. Export controls ensure that transfers take place for peaceful purposes, as required by the relevant conventions and treaties, while facilitating cooperation and technological development.

In that context, the European Union supports the efforts of the Nuclear Suppliers Group, the Australia Group, the Missile Technology Control Regime and the Wassenaar Arrangement — of which all European member States are members — to prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and of their means of delivery and, in the case of the Wassenaar Arrangement, to promote transparency and greater responsibility in the transfer of conventional arms and of dual-use goods and technologies.

The European Union played an active part in the 2001 United Nations Conference on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, as well as in the elaboration of the United Nations Programme of Action, in the negotiations on the Protocol against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Their Parts and Components and Ammunition, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, and in the adoption of the document of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe on small arms and light weapons. The European Union stresses the need for prompt implementation of the United Nations Programme of Action to combat the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons.

The European Union had hoped for a stronger Programme of Action on certain points. Therefore, the Union is committed to an effective, ambitious and continuous follow-up process leading through the 2003 and 2005 Conferences to the following Review Conference in 2006. The 2003 Conference will be the first occasion to take stock of progress — or the lack thereof — in the implementation of the Programme of Action. However, taking stock must be a dynamic process in which there is room for making proposals to strengthen and to develop the measures contained in the Programme of Action. Only by using the two biannual conferences and the time between them will we be able to prepare appropriately for a successful 2006 Review Conference.

The European Union Joint Action on small arms and light weapons constitutes the overall framework of EU policy within that field. The EU Joint Action stipulates a set of principles and measures that the EU will pursue in relevant international forums and in a regional context, and it contains provisions for technical and financial assistance. In July 2002, its scope of application was extended to include ammunition. The EU intends to continue its support through aid to affected States, aiming at, inter alia, the collection and destruction of small arms and light weapons. Information on the implementation of the EU Joint Action can be found in the second annual report, which will soon be published. The report gives an overview of the efforts of the EU and of its Member States, but it also contains reflections on priorities for future assistance by the European Union.

Responsibility with regard to arms transfer policies is essential in addressing the problem of small arms. The Code of Conduct on Arms Exports, approved by the EU Council on 8 June 1998, establishes the criteria for conventional arms transfers and provides for consultation procedures to promote the convergence of national arms export policies. Each year, the European Union publishes a report on the application of the Code by member States. This year's report will be marked by increased transparency achieved through better and more comprehensive statistical data and a compendium of agreed practices related to the Code. Among the items covered are exports of equipment for humanitarian purposes, control of arms-brokering activities, requirements of end-user certificates, transit and the production of military goods under licence.

The European Union underlines the importance of the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms — which has its tenth anniversary this year — not only as a global confidence-building measure to support stability and security, but also as a measure encouraging regional efforts aimed at greater

transparency. The value of the Register will be increased through the greatest possible participation.

The Union reiterates its call on all States to submit timely returns of their imports and exports to the Register, including — to further increase transparency and strengthen the value of the Register — information on military holdings and procurement through national production. The European Union also reiterates its support for an expanded Register, for its scope to be extended as quickly as possible and for its universalization.

The ratification or accession of almost 130 States to the Ottawa Convention on the prohibition of anti-personnel mines leaves no doubt that an international norm has been established that can no longer be ignored. The European Union remains strongly committed to promoting the global eradication of anti-personnel mines and will continue to campaign for a universal and swift application of the Convention. The European Union urges non-signatories to accede to the Convention without delay; among them are some of the biggest and most populated countries in the world, within which huge stocks of anti-personnel mines are still stored. Furthermore, the European Union calls upon non-State actors as well to abide by the principles of the Convention and to comply with them.

The Convention laid down strict time limits for the destruction of stocks and for the clearance of mined areas. Even though the Convention gives some degree of flexibility, we must all do our utmost to achieve the objectives within the set deadlines of the Convention. Compliance with the Convention and humanitarian mine activities are mutually reinforcing. In this regard, the European Union will work for a strengthening of international coordination and cooperation within humanitarian mine action as a whole.

The European Union will, although moved primarily by humanitarian concerns, give priority to directing its aid towards those States parties that put the Convention's principles and objectives into practice. Apart from some exemptions in the Convention, the European Union regards the use, stockpiling, production and transfer of anti-personnel mines, whatever the context or reasons, as banned by the Convention. By pledging a total of 240 million euros in support of mine action for the period 2002-2009, the European Union stands ready to contribute to anti-personnel mine efforts.

The Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May be Deemed to be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects (CCW) is an important instrument. During the Second Review Conference last year, the States parties were able to agree upon several important steps. The most important of these was, of course, the extension of the Convention's scope of application to cover not only international armed conflicts but also conflicts not of an international character. The Union is highly satisfied with this achievement. In our opinion, it is therefore of the utmost importance that all States parties adhere to the amended Article 1 as soon as possible.

Another achievement was the establishment of a Group of Governmental Experts to consider further measures to address the issues of "Explosive remnants of war", "Mines other than anti-personnel mines", and "Options to promote compliance with the CCW".

A number of proposals and ideas have already been formulated throughout the meetings of the Group this year. These ideas will have to be examined at the Meeting of the States Parties to the CCW in December next.

The European Union is particularly concerned by the serious problems caused by the explosive remnants of war and the humanitarian and social consequences of the presence of unexploded ordnance. It is therefore the strong wish of the European Union that the Group of Governmental Experts on the Explosive Remnants of War will soon be able to start negotiating a legally binding instrument.

Furthermore, the Union remains concerned about the serious humanitarian problems caused by the irresponsible use of anti-vehicle (AV) mines as well as the use of sensitive types of AV mines, for which appropriate measures should be considered in order to reduce the risks these types of weapons might pose to civilians. The European Union supports the development of a legally binding instrument that should include provisions on the detectability and technological improvement of remotely delivered AV mines.

The European Union urges nations not to relax their efforts to achieve the fundamental objectives of disarmament and non-proliferation. Multilateral efforts must continue; indeed, they must be stepped up. The European Union trusts that this session of the First

Committee will contribute to that goal in accordance with the Organization's mission: the consolidation of peace and security through international cooperation.

The Chairman: I should like to remind delegations kindly to limit their statements to 10 minutes, as agreed, in order to enable the Committee to hear all speakers inscribed on the list.

Mr. De Rivero (Peru) (*spoke in Spanish*): Mr. Chairman, I support your proposal that we limit our statements to 10 minutes. I promise that I will speak for less than 10 minutes.

First of all, I should like to congratulate you, Sir, on your election, and to extend these congratulations to the other members of the Bureau.

A year ago, this Committee began its work at a time when we were still reeling from the terrorist attacks that shook New York and the world. Those attacks proved that the world is facing a new threat to international security, namely, asymmetrical conflict.

Asymmetrical conflict renders useless defence concepts that base security on huge and expensive nuclear and conventional weapons systems — systems that in no way deter terrorism. Neither aircraft carriers, nor ballistic missiles, nor tanks, nor great armies work in this context. They work even less for the poor countries, where social exclusion and the feeling of losing one's dignity can spawn subversion and perhaps terrorism.

Insofar as Latin America is concerned, for instance, the possibility of war among Latin American States has practically disappeared. I wonder if we could not turn our armed forces into smaller and more operational forces that would serve to meet new threats to security such as asymmetrical conflict, internal subversion, drug trafficking and the increasingly frequent natural disasters in our part of the world, and prepare our armed forces for undertaking civic and social action as well as participating in United Nations peacekeeping operations.

For all of these reasons, Peru has been playing a leading role in promoting a series of initiatives at the subregional and regional levels designed to reduce military expenditures for the purposes I have mentioned. First among these initiatives proposed by my country was the creation of an Andean zone of peace. On 17 July 2002, Bolivia, Ecuador, Colombia, Peru and Venezuela adopted the Lima Commitment, establishing the Andean Charter for Peace and Security, and committing these five countries to working jointly for the limitation and control of military spending.

This is a substantial step forward, requiring the formulation of a common Andean security policy to include limits on the expenditures for external defence, controls regarding conventional weapons and increased measures of transparency.

Our second proposal was the creation of a South American zone of peace and cooperation, approved on 27 July of this year by the Presidents of the 12 countries of the South American subcontinent. We hope that this fifty-seventh session of the General Assembly will pick up on this initiative and that it will receive the recognition and cooperation of all the Member States of this Organization in order to attain the goals of disarmament, security and development that we have posited.

The third proposal we have put forward involves reducing defence expenditures. We have raised this with our friends around the region, the goal being to reorient the funds so as to free them up for poverty eradication and for social development, thus increasing, above all, health and education budgets.

This initiative has drawn support at various regional and subregional forums, such as through a resolution adopted by the Organization of American States, in the Ministerial Declaration of the Non-Aligned Movement in Durban and in the latest declarations by the heads of State and Government of the Rio Group in Santiago and in San José, Costa Rica.

These latter declarations reflect the backing for the proposal to gradually and effectively reduce defence expenditures, to permit using the funds involved to fight poverty. It was urged that this advance be expanded at both the bilateral and multilateral levels. Peru will comply by taking the steps necessary for turning this proposal into reality.

The fourth initiative involved negotiating a zone from which missiles would be banned across Latin America, with the goal of strengthening security in the region. This proposal includes not only air-to-air missiles, but also long- and medium-range missiles. Again, the point is to strengthen security throughout the entire region.

An ad hoc meeting of experts will shortly take place in Lima. We hope to have present there all the countries of the region to analyse this proposal and its scope.

Finally, the fifth proposal put forward is that of further strengthening the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean, and to turn it into a focal point for all these region-wide initiatives. With this in mind, we hope that the Organization will grant the Centre greater resources.

I wish to conclude my remarks by reaffirming that my country sees this Committee as playing the role of a forum appropriate for dialogue and debate on disarmament and arms control. In this sense, we reiterate Peru's commitment to total cooperation in the work we will be doing this year.

Mr. Hasmy (Malaysia): I join others in congratulating you, Sir, on your election as the Chairman of the First Committee, as well as to the members of your Bureau on their election. I am confident that that, given your vast experience and expertise, you will be able to steer the deliberations of this Committee to a successful conclusion. We warmly welcome the representatives of Switzerland and Timor-Leste in our deliberations.

My delegation's appreciation also goes to your predecessor, Ambassador André Erdös of Hungary, for the outstanding manner in which he guided the work of this Committee during the fifty-sixth session of the General Assembly.

The representative of Myanmar will be making a statement later on behalf of the Association of South-East Asian Nations, to which my delegation fully associates itself, but I would like to take this opportunity to make some brief remarks on issues of particular interest to Malaysia.

My delegation views with concern the lack of real progress in nuclear disarmament over the past year. The situation is made more alarming by the changed international climate, characterized by the steady erosion of the multilateral process during the same period. This negative development in the international security situation is acknowledged by the Secretary-General himself who, in his report to the General Assembly, observed that little cooperation in the field of disarmament was achieved this past year. Tens of thousands of nuclear weapons continue to be stockpiled in the arsenals of the nuclear Powers, while progress in the negotiations on nuclear disarmament remains negligible. It is important that we should not be lulled into complacency just because the cold war is over; the threat of nuclear war between nuclear-armed States in our contemporary world has not disappeared. Indeed, in some situations, and in the context of emerging security doctrines, the risks of armed conflict involving nuclear weapons may even have increased. Therefore, every effort should be made by the international community not to lower its vigilance and to press ahead towards achieving the ultimate goal of the elimination of these horrendous weapons of mass destruction.

In April 2002, the first Preparatory Committee meeting for the 2005 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) was held. My delegation would like to congratulate Ambassador Hendrik Salander of Sweden for the effective manner in which he conducted the work of that meeting. The meeting was held against the backdrop of the formulation of a new Nuclear Posture Review by a nuclear weapon State, which expands the role of nuclear weapons beyond their essentially deterrent function, with grave implications to international peace and security. This Nuclear Posture Review is perceived by many as a clear rejection of the 13 steps agreed upon by the nuclear weapon States at the 2000 NPT Review Conference. Malaysia is very much disappointed and dismayed at these developments and urges all nuclear-weapon States parties to the Treaty not to renege on their undertakings made two years ago, as that would deal a serious blow to the viability of the Treaty and to the disarmament process in general.

My delegation hopes that serious efforts will be made to give substance to these undertakings, as we begin to prepare for next NPT Preparatory Committee in Geneva and the Review Conference in 2005. In the current volatile political climate, it is imperative that we strive for the Treaty's continued viability. This can be ensured only through concrete outcomes of the review process premised on the fulfilment by States parties of all of their Treaty commitments. Any divergence from these commitments would further undermine the NPT.

In order to ensure the continued viability of the Treaty and the multilateral disarmament process, a

more cooperative attitude must be manifested by the nuclear-weapon States parties to the Treaty. There should be increased readiness on their part to account for actions taken by them in fulfilment of their Treaty commitments. The onus for the continued viability and success of the NPT is on them, not on the non-nuclear-weapon States, which have long fulfilled their part of the bargain.

The NPT has been universally accepted as the cornerstone of the global nuclear non-proliferation regime, but regrettably its universality continues to remain elusive. We continue to believe in the critical importance of the universality of the Treaty. Malaysia therefore warmly welcomes the announcement by Cuba to accede to the Treaty and to ratify the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean — the Treaty of Tlatelolco. This important decision by Cuba, taken in spite of the current negative trends on the disarmament scene, reflects the positive and constructive orientation of the Government of Cuba on the nuclear disarmament issue. It is a clear affirmation by a non-Treaty State of its belief in the viability of the NPT and the continued relevance of the non-proliferation regime. We earnestly hope that the Cuban decision and final action to accede to the NPT will strongly encourage the three remaining non-Treaty States — Israel, India and Pakistan — to re-examine their position and to contribute towards the early realization of the universality of the Treaty.

Malaysia is encouraged by the continued positive response by countries to sign and ratify the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT). We hope that this positive trend will solidify the norms against nuclear proliferation and further development of nuclear weapons. Malaysia would strongly urge the 13 remaining countries to respond to the appeal by the Secretary-General to accede to and ratify the CTBT, pursuant to article XIV, so as to effect its entry into force as soon as possible.

While Malaysia is gratified with its membership in the Conference on Disarmament, we are disappointed and disheartened with regard to the continuing impasse in the Conference. Its continued deadlock would undermine further whatever credibility the Conference on Disarmament may still have as the single multilateral negotiating forum on disarmament. We strongly urge the President of the Conference on Disarmament and the three special coordinators designated by it to make every effort to break the impasse and move the negotiations forward. In the current context, there is a need to manifest renewed faith in the multilateral disarmament process, as represented by the Conference on Disarmament, by a more determined effort to begin to address the critical issues on its agenda.

Last year we witnessed a serious challenge to the validity and viability of multilateral disarmament diplomacy. The international community has yet to fully recover from the shock following the demise of the Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty, in the wake of the withdrawal of the United States from that Treaty. The Moscow Treaty, signed between the United States and Russia following the abrogation of the ABM Treaty, will not be able to replace that Treaty, because while it was viewed as a step towards reducing the deployment of strategic nuclear weapons, it did not address the issue of irreversibility and the verification of nuclear disarmament. My delegation is of the view that the abrogation of the ABM Treaty will have grave consequences for future progress in arms control and non-proliferation efforts and, inevitably, the future of international security.

We were also dismayed at the suspension last year of the Fifth Review Conference of the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC). This was another disappointing setback in the multilateral disarmament process in the past few years. We hope that the cooling off period will enable the States parties to the Convention to continue their important work towards reaching an agreement on a Final Declaration to strengthen the BWC.

My delegation welcomes the tenth anniversary of the creation of the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms. We continue to support international efforts to promote transparency and confidence-building measures among States. With the advent of new and highly sophisticated technologies in the conventional weapons industry, the danger posed by conventional weapons has become even more acute. It is very disheartening to observe that in a number of armed conflicts in the developing world, including in Africa, highly sophisticated and expensive conventional weapons have been used in spite of the crushing poverty there. The adoption of a Programme of Action at the end of the 2001 United Nations Conference on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects is a significant step towards achieving the goal of preventing, combating

and eradicating the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons. It is our fervent hope that States will fulfil their respective obligations under the Programme of Action. My delegation believes that the issue of the proliferation of small arms and light weapons must be viewed from the holistic perspective of arms control and disarmament, post-conflict peace-building, conflict prevention and socio-economic development.

My delegation wishes to reiterate its strong commitment to the purposes and intent of the Ottawa Convention. Malaysia has completed the destruction of its small stockpile of anti-personnel landmines and has thus promptly fulfilled its obligations under article 4 of the Ottawa Convention. We are also committed to the attainment of a truly universal ban on anti-personnel landmines. It remains our hope and expectation that there will a stronger political push for universal acceptance of that Treaty. In this regard, we welcome the successful conclusion of the Fourth Meeting of the States Parties, held recently in Geneva.

Malaysia views the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones as an integral part of the quest to free the world from nuclear weapons, as well as to promote regional peace and stability. Having worked tirelessly with its Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) partners for the establishment of the Treaty on the South-East Asia Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone, Malaysia looks forward to the continuation of direct consultations between ASEAN and the nuclear-weapon States in the first half of 2003, with a view to encouraging the nuclear-weapon States to accede to the Treaty Protocol. My delegation also attaches great importance to the promotion of such zones and strongly supports their establishment in other parts of the world, particularly in West Asia and the Middle East, as called for in the resolution on the Middle East adopted at the 1995 NPT Review Conference and reconfirmed at the 2000 Review Conference.

The establishment of such a zone in the region is particularly pertinent in the context of the prevailing volatile political and security environment there. We would also strongly encourage the establishment of such a zone in South Asia, given the perilous situation there, which the Secretary-General himself identified, in his recent address to the General Assembly, as one of the "four current threats to world peace" (*A/57/PV.2*).

We welcome the progress that has been made by the countries of Central Asia, whose expert group has agreed on the text of a treaty to establish a nuclear-weapon-free zone in their subregion, which the Under-Secretary-General has just highlighted.

The historic Advisory Opinion of the International Court of Justice on the legality of the threat and use of nuclear weapons, of July 1996, remains an important milestone in the global campaign for nuclear disarmament. We regret that the important Opinion of the World Court continues to be ignored by the nuclear-weapon States. Malaysia and other like-minded countries will continue to pursue follow-up actions to the Advisory Opinion of the Court at this and future sessions of the General Assembly. We hope that, as in previous years, the draft resolution will continue to enjoy wide support from States Members of this Organization. We trust that this initiative will contribute towards keeping the focus on nuclear disarmament and on the final and achievable goal of the elimination of nuclear weapons in the foreseeable future.

Finally, my delegation wishes to pay the highest tribute to the Department for Disarmament Affairs, under the able and effective leadership of Under-Secretary-General Jayantha Dhanapala. We thank him for his thoughtful statement this morning and for the important work carried out by the Department in promoting the disarmament agenda of the United Nations. We also strongly support the appeal by the Secretary-General to rededicate ourselves to multilateral approaches to disarmament. In spite of — indeed, because of — the recent and current setbacks in the multilateral disarmament process, the multilateral search for genuine measures of disarmament and the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons must remain high on the global disarmament agenda. The Department for Disarmament Affairs has an important role to play in that effort. We are confident that, under Mr. Dhanapala's leadership, the Department will continue to play a supportive and catalytic role in the service of the States Members of this Organization.

In conclusion, Malaysia would urge the international community to support and respond positively to the call by the Secretary-General during the Millennium Summit for the convening of an international conference to consider all aspects of the nuclear-weapons issue. Against the backdrop of the current negative trends in the global security

environment, the convening of such a conference would be most timely indeed.

The Chairman: May I once again appeal to delegations to limit their statements to 10 minutes, not only to permit other inscribed speakers to speak, but also to enable this meeting to conclude its deliberations by 1 p.m.

Ms. Panckhurst (New Zealand): First of all, let me congratulate you, Sir, on assuming the Chair. You have New Zealand's full cooperation in what we hope will be a productive session.

The fragility of international security was all too well demonstrated to us last year with the terrorist attacks on this, our host city and country. The events of 11 September and threats of possible use of weapons of mass destruction serve to remind us that, here in the First Committee, there can be no room for complacency in our work.

New Zealand has consistently sought to push the disarmament, arms control and non-proliferation agenda forward. Now, during this time of increased uncertainty, is not a time when States should be pulling back from multilateral initiatives. Instead, we should be reinvigorating these efforts. As New Zealand's Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Mr. Phil Goff, said during this year's General Assembly debate, "It is essential that we renew our commitment to multilateralism as the best way to address global problems." (*A/57/PV.7*) In other words, collective problems require collective solutions.

At the cornerstone of New Zealand's disarmament policy is a drive for a world free of nuclear weapons. We have continued to work with our New Agenda Coalition partners towards real and substantive action being taken on the 13 steps agreed to at the 2000 Review Conference of Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). In this regard, we welcome the news of Cuba's intention to accede to the NPT and urge those few countries still outside the Treaty to follow Cuba's example and accede as non-nuclear weapon States as soon as possible.

As already outlined by the Ambassador of Ireland, the New Agenda Coalition this year will be proposing two draft resolutions. The first draft resolution, entitled "Towards a nuclear-weapon-free world: the need for a new agenda", outlines the necessary steps to confront the threats that are posed by the proliferation of nuclear weapons. This draft resolution is not only an opportunity for States to demonstrate commitment to the elimination of nuclear weapons; it presents also an opportunity to demonstrate that the First Committee's work is relevant and useful. It is a comprehensive account of progress to date on nuclear disarmament negotiations and, furthermore, sets out a plan for future action. In 2000, much of this plan gained the support of 187 States.

An important step in the programme of action agreed at the 2000 NPT Review Conference was the further reduction of non-strategic nuclear weapons. The second draft resolution that has been tabled by the Ambassador of Ireland on behalf of the New Agenda Coalition will, we hope, be the first move towards addressing this important issue. In some respects, short-range tactical nuclear weapons pose a greater threat than strategic weapons, as there is a real risk that tactical nuclear weapons could be launched by accident or in the confusion of war, with no time available for communication between opposing sides. There are, worries, too about the security of tactical nuclear weapons.

The first and crucial step of the programme of action agreed at the 2000 NPT Review Conference — the early entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) — is still not within sight. The CTBT is a contribution towards the systematic reduction of nuclear weapons and the prevention of nuclear proliferation by ridding the world of nuclear-weapons test explosions. The failure so far to bring into force this fundamental step towards non-proliferation and disarmament threatens to undermine the credibility of disarmament negotiations.

New Zealand declared itself and its waters a nuclear-weapon-free zone in 1987 with the passage of the New Zealand Nuclear Free Zone, Disarmament and Arms Control Act. The South Pacific is also a nuclear-weapon-free zone and there are other nuclear-weapon-free zones around the world. We support Brazil's initiative to join the nuclear-weapon-free zones in the southern hemisphere to create a southern hemisphere free of nuclear weapons. This is in no way an attempt to impinge on the rights all States enjoy under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, but would comprise a positive act of common purpose.

Just over a year ago, in this city, the international community agreed on a Programme of Action to deal with the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects. New Zealand supported this Programme of Action and we remain firm in our commitment to tackle the flow of these weapons around the world. Small arms and light weapons are real-time killers and they pose grave humanitarian, development and social challenges. New Zealand supports the implementation of the provisions set out in the Programme of Action and we are working with partners in our region towards this end.

It is an issue of deep concern to New Zealand that the preparations for the resumed Review Conference of the States Parties to the Biological Weapons Convention, scheduled to take place in November this year, are in difficulty. States have negotiated for years towards the development and implementation of a compliance mechanism for the Biological Weapons Convention. The technology and science that feeds into biosecurity and bioterrorism is being rapidly developed. But while the United Nations is still struggling to identify and to eliminate biological weapons developed in one State — and we have witnessed the use of biological weapons in another State — we have been unable to bring the negotiations for a system of verification and compliance to completion.

The year 2002 has been a challenging one for the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW). The process of changing the leadership of the Technical Secretariat was a difficult one for all of us, but we are confident that the new Director-General, Rogelio Pfirter of Argentina, has the skills to take the OPCW forwards. He has made a fine start.

Next year is expected to present challenges as well. Member States must seize the opportunity to be provided by the First Review Conference of the Chemical Weapons Convention in order to give tangible effect to our determination, for the sake of all humankind, to exclude completely the possibility of the use of chemical weapons. That is surely our task, and we should not fool ourselves that it is complete.

It continues to be a major disappointment to New Zealand that yet again the Conference on Disarmament has failed to agree on a programme of work. It is a great pity that linkages between issues should be allowed to hold the Conference to ransom. At a time when other international organizations have opened to the participation of non-governmental organizations and broadest memberships, we find the Conference out of step with reality and with the aspirations of civil society.

In direct contrast to the Conference on Disarmament is the Ottawa Convention banning the use of anti-personnel mines. New Zealand remains a steadfast supporter of the Ottawa Convention. The cooperative and constructive spirit in which States Parties and non-governmental organizations have come together to work towards the total elimination of anti-personnel mines is heartening, and it shows that when States are determined, progress can be achieved. New Zealand, along with Australia, continues to work with Pacific Island Countries to achieve the complete universalization of the Convention in the South Pacific. Anti-personnel mines are not employed in the South Pacific. So, we have some administrative tidying to do.

While we can take satisfaction from the work that has been done on anti-personnel mines, there remains much to do on explosive remnants of war. Those objects are often a direct danger to life and limb and an obstacle to the delivery of humanitarian aid, the cultivation of agricultural land and the rebuilding of communities devastated by war. In the context of the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons, New Zealand strongly supports the work of the Group of Governmental Experts in Geneva.

Finally, New Zealand is a strong supporter of the United Nations Experts Group on Disarmament and Non-Proliferation Education. Ms. Kate Dewes, Vice-President of the International Peace Bureau, was appointed by the Secretary-General as the New Zealand expert on the Group. We are convinced that the dissemination of information on disarmament and the raising of awareness about disarmament in general are essential in order to ensure that future generations steer our world away from conflict and towards peace.

Mr. Gousous (Jordan): At the outset, I would like to congratulate you on your assumption of the chairmanship of the First Committee for the fifty-seventh session of the General Assembly and wish you every success in discharging the task with which you have been entrusted. We have every confidence in your ability to fulfil your responsibilities. I would also like to thank the Permanent Representative of Hungary for his distinguished efforts as Chairman of the First

Committee during the fifty-sixth session of the General Assembly.

The terrorist attacks on the United States a year ago caused immense tragedy and destruction. Those acts, by targeting innocent civilians and civilian structures, not only challenged our sense of security but also outraged our conscience. Those acts make the work of the United Nations for peace, disarmament, non-proliferation and security more important than ever. They should lead us to renew our adherence to the body of disarmament and arms control agreements.

The First Committee meets this year, with remarkable achievements, as well as serious challenges, in the field of international security and disarmament. On one side of the balance sheet is the ratification by 82 States party to the Ottawa Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-personnel Mines and on Their Destruction; the continued work of the Biological and Toxic Weapons Convention Ad Hoc Group aiming at establishing a verification and compliance regime for the Biological and Toxic Weapons Convention; the signing of the Chemical Weapons Convention by 165 States, 146 of which have deposited ratifications; and the ratification of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty by 93 countries.

On the other side of the balance sheet, we continue to see the ongoing reluctance by the only State in the Middle East with considerable nuclear weapon capabilities, Israel, to adhere to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and to place all its nuclear installations and facilities under full scope safeguards of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). Also, we see the continued reluctance by the Nuclear-Weapons States to meet their obligations in compliance with Article VI of the NPT by pursuing negotiation in good faith on effective measures relating to nuclear disarmament. The lack of full agreement to the Protocol of the Biological Weapons Convention is another setback for the international cooperation. In addition, we note the absence of real genuine intentions to convene the Fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament. Finally, there is the failure so far to take practical steps towards broadening the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms to encompass military holdings and procurement through national production, as well as stockpiles of weapons of mass destruction, in particular nuclear weapons.

The growing gap between the rich and the poor is fuelling inequality. A continuation of the unjust status quo will inevitably continue to fuel conflicts in several regions. Small arms are the weapons of choice for today's combatants because of their ease of use and availability. The supply of limitless quantities of small arms and light weapons in areas of high tension has fuelled numerous civil wars and caused the death of victims who are mostly civilians. This is why the United Nations Conference on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects achieved important progress in July 2001. The Conference attracted widespread attention, with the world's media reporting extensively on the cost and carnage caused by those weapons. Civil society groups from across the globe were deeply and creatively involved. After tense and difficult negotiations, Member States forged a consensus among diverse views and interests and adopted a comprehensive Programme of Action, whose full implementation we call for, promptly and as soon as possible.

Jordan has always been committed to the cause of international peace and security. Over the years, we have advocated a peaceful settlement to the conflict in the Middle East, a settlement that could lead to just, comprehensive and durable peace in the region. We realized, as did many others within and outside the region, that for durable peace to be achieved, positive steps towards confidence-building between the parties have to be taken. In addition to such steps is freeing the region of nuclear and all other weapons of mass destruction.

Jordan has adhered to the Chemical Weapons Convention, ratified the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and the Ottawa Convention on Anti-personnel Mines, and signed an IAEA additional protocol for safeguards. By so doing, Jordan has completed its adherence to all international instruments providing for the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, as well as the prohibition of other weapons of mass destruction, including chemical and biological weapons. It is noteworthy in that context that the General Assembly has, over the past two decades, called upon all States in the Middle East that have not yet done so — particularly the only State in the region with nuclear-weapon capabilities — to adhere without delay to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and to place all its nuclear facilities under full-scope IAEA safeguards. All the States in the

Middle East, with the exception of Israel, are now parties to the NPT.

Since 1974, the General Assembly has called for the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East, and since then, that resolution, by being adopted by consensus, has gained increased momentum.

Furthermore, in paragraph 5 of its resolution on the Middle East, the 1995 NPT Review and Extension Conference called upon all States in the region to

> "take practical steps in appropriate forums aimed at making progress towards, inter alia, the establishment of an effectively verifiable Middle East zone free of weapons of mass destruction, nuclear, chemical and biological, and their delivery systems, and to refrain from taking any measures that preclude the achievement of this objective".

The 2000 NPT Review Conference reaffirmed the importance of that resolution.

Paragraph 6 of the same resolution called upon all States party to the NPT, and in particular the nuclear-weapon States, to extend their cooperation and to exert their utmost efforts to ensure achievement of that goal. Unfortunately, seven years since the historical 1995 NPT Review and Extension Conference, and more than two years since the 2000 NPT Review Conference, no indication of such effort has so far been observed in the region.

As far as the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty is concerned, we are encouraged by the fact that so far 165 States have signed the Treaty, 93 States have ratified it and 31 have deposited instruments of ratification. We join the other Member States that called on all countries that have not yet done so, to sign and ratify the Treaty, particularly the 44 States whose ratification is necessary for the Treaty to come into force.

We are also encouraged by the negotiations aimed at concluding a non-discriminatory and universally applicable convention banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons. On many occasions, Jordan has reiterated the importance of a fissile material cut-off treaty as a significant step towards achieving both nuclear non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament. On the other hand, we regret that the Conference on Disarmament has failed to agree on its programme of work for the last six years, as well as its failure to start constructive negotiations on the fissile material cut-off treaty, among other things.

Jordan has been a staunch supporter of the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms. We regard the Register as an indispensable mechanism for achieving transparency in armaments that leads to confidence-building, especially in conflict-prone regions such as the Middle East. However, we believe that the Register will not be effective unless its scope is expanded to include military holdings and procurement through national production, as well as weapons of mass destruction, nuclear weapons in particular. We therefore regret the fact that the Panel of Governmental Experts failed to deal with that problem.

As I outlined earlier, Jordan has ratified the Ottawa Convention on Anti-personnel Mines. That step has served to reaffirm our commitment to help eliminate that most excessively injurious and inhumane weapon that has indiscriminate effects, especially on children and other innocent civilians. Her Majesty Queen Noor of Jordan, in her capacity as patron of the Landmine Survivors' Network, is leading and contributing to the worldwide campaign to rid the world of anti-personnel landmines.

Finally, let me share with members a quotation by His Late Majesty King Hussein of Jordan: "Real victories are those that protect human life, not those that result from its destruction or emerge from its ashes".

The Chairman: Since we are now getting closer to the end of our meeting this morning, the Committee will listen to the remaining speakers, namely Qatar and the Republic of Korea, tomorrow morning. But before I adjourn the meeting, I would like to give the floor to the representative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, who wishes to exercise his right of reply.

Mr. An Myong Hun (Democratic People's Republic of Korea): In view of some statements on the implementation of the International Atomic Energy Agency safeguard agreements vis-à-vis the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, my delegation feels it necessary to reiterate its position in general. We, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, strongly demand that all efforts be made for nuclear disarmament and the elimination of nuclear threats. Those efforts stem from the fiscal reality we face on the Korean peninsula. We stand for the total removal of

all nuclear weapons and the withdrawal of foreign forces from the peninsula.

Regarding NPT safeguards, we need to know the essence of the nuclear issue regarding the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. The so-called nuclear issue stemmed from the intention and purpose to destroy our system and stifle our country, against the background of the newly prevailing international political environment of the early 1990s. In essence, it is the product of the hostile policy of the United States towards the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. The issue of implementing the safeguards agreement will automatically be resolved when the hostile relations between the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the United States are resolved and when the Democratic People's Republic of Korea-United States Agreed Framework is implemented.

The core element contained in the Agreed Framework, reached on 21 October 1994, is the provision of light-water reactors by the United States in lieu of a freeze on our nuclear activities. So far, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea has fulfilled its obligations 100 per cent with regard to the Agreed Framework. However, the United States just started ground concrete tamping and has thus not met the target to complete the light water reactor construction by 2003, as it had promised under the Agreed Framework.

As relations between the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the United States are hostile, not based on trust, the commitments of the two sides under the Agreed Framework should be implemented on the principle of simultaneous action. We call upon the United States to drop its hostile policy against the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and implement the Agreed Framework as it had pledged.

I hope that the First Committee will view all other related issues in this vein.

The Chairman: Distinguished delegates, with this right of reply from the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, the Committee has had the last speaker for this morning's meeting. Before I adjourn the meeting, I would like to remind the Committee that in accordance with the Committee's programme of work and timetable, the list of speakers for the general debate on disarmament and international security agenda items will be closed today, Monday, 30 September, at 6 p.m. I urge those delegations wishing to participate in the general debate to kindly inscribe their names on the list of speakers as soon as possible, in order to enable us to fully and constructively utilize the conference facilities made available for the Committee.

It should be further noted that, as agreed at the organizational meeting, the deadline for the submission of draft resolutions and decisions has been set at 6 p.m. on Thursday, 10 October. It is my intention, with your cooperation, to strictly implement this deadline as in previous years. In this connection, I wish to urge you kindly to submit your draft resolutions and decisions as early as possible, especially traditional draft resolutions and decisions, and the draft resolutions that might entail programme budget implications.

The meeting rose at 1.10 p.m.